

The Suspect: A Loyal Follower Of Charles Manson

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Lynette Alice Fromme, 27, charged with trying to kill President Ford yesterday in Sacramento, was the second woman that mass-murderer Charles Manson recruited into his "family" eight years ago, and she has apparently remained a fanatic Manson follower.

Tiny and redhaired, known as "Squeaky" because of her high-pitched voice, Fromme was at Manson's side until he was arrested for the murder of actress Sharon Tate and six other people in 1970. Since Manson's conviction, Fromme has maintained contact with him, has tried repeatedly to see him and has told many people that she still believes he is the second coming of Jesus Christ.

In an interview with filmmaker Robert Hendrickson, producer of the documentary "Manson," which is soon to be released nationally, Fromme said: "I'm ready to die for Charlie [Manson]; he's ready to die for me."

Two months ago, Fromme and San-

dra Goode, another Manson loyalist, issued a statement to the press warning of bloodshed if President Ford remained in office. The statement said:

"If Nixon's (sic) reality wearing a new face (i.e., President Ford) continues to run this country against the law, your homes will be bloodier than the Tate-LaBianca houses and Mylai put together."

Tate-LaBianca was the shorthand, unofficial name of the trial at which Manson and his colleagues were convicted of the ritualistic murders of Tate, Mr. and Mrs. Leno LaBianca and four others. Mylai was the scene of a massacre of Vietnamese civilians by U.S. soldiers.

Fromme has faced murder charges on two occasions. In the first case, the charge was reduced and she served 90 days in prison for interfering with a witness in the Manson trial. She had helped other Manson women feed the witness a hamburger laced with LSD.

In 1972 she was charged with murdering Lauren Willett, 19, whose hus-

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Suspect Fromme:

4 Manson Followers Jailed in LSD Case

LOS ANGELES, April 16 (UPI) — Four followers of Charles Manson were sentenced today to 90 days in jail for feeding a hamburger spiked with LSD to a station witness.

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Superior Court Judge Stephen R. Stothers imposed the sentences on Catherine Grogan, and Dennis

Manson Followers Held In California Murder

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STOCKTON, Calif., Nov. 13 (AP)—Five persons—at least two of them former followers of the Charles Manson family—have been arrested in the slaying of a woman, whose body was found buried beneath a house here, police said.

The body of Lauren Chaville Willett, 19, was dug up Sunday, four days after Sheriff's detectives in Sonoma County, 100 miles to the northwest, unearthed the decomposing corpse of her husband, James T. Willett, 26.

Police said Mrs. Willett had been shot once in the forehead with a .38-caliber pistol.

Booked for investigation of her murder were Michael Lee Monfort, 24; James T. Craig, 33; Priscilla K. Cooper, 21; Nancy Laura Pitman, 24; and Lynette Alice Fromme, 24.

All were listed by police as transients.

Miss Pitman and Miss Fromme, both former followers of the Manson clan, were camped outside the Los Angeles courthouse during the sensational trial of the murder cult leader, Miss Fromme known in the family as "Squeaky"—testified at length during the trial.

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Marine from Los Angeles County, was unearthed last Wednesday from a shallow grave near the Russian River south of Guerneville after a hiker noticed a hand protruding from the ground. He was still wearing his military uniform and investigators said he apparently had been dead about three months. Cause of death had not been determined.

Sonoma County District Attorney John Hawkes said five persons arrested in Stockton "include suspects in husband's death," which said was definitely "a homicide." Hawkes said he to issue warrants "some or all" of the four Manson followers in April sentenced in Los Angeles for trying to flee from the mess from the Sharon Tate giving her a LSD.

The four pleaded no contest after conspiracy charges against them were reduced from felonies to misdemeanors. The prosecution contended the four lured another clan member, Barbara Hoyt, 19, to Honolulu before she was

3 of 'Family' Arrested in Manson Case

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 18—Police today arrested three more girl members of the Charles Manson family, alleging they conspired to kill a witness by luring her to Hawaii and feeding her a hamburger laced with LSD.

Catherine (Gypsy) Share Fromme, 22, and Ruth Ann Morehouse, 18, will be arraigned Monday.

They were arrested on a street corner near the trial court where they have held a constant vigil for 36-year-old Manson. All with crosses cut into their foreheads to denote membership of the Manson family, they were led away singing one of Manson's songs.

Collage of previous stories details Lynette Fromme's life in the news.

Loyal Member of Charles

FROMME, From A1

band also was murdered that year. The Willetts had been involved with the Manson family. But there was insufficient evidence against Fromme and the charge was dropped.

She was never directly connected with the Tate-LaBianca killings.

For years, journalists and law-enforcement officials who met Fromme took away the same impression: she was a small, frail, naive girl with a sublime, beatific smile—"the smile of a true believer," according to Curt Gentry, coauthor of "HELTER Skelter," a best-selling book about the Manson case.

Her devotion to Manson has apparently been all-consuming. According to California prison authorities, she has been trying for years to see him and communicate with him—by sending messages or emissaries—and with substantial success.

In 1974, according to a spokesman for the California Department of Corrections, Manson apparently contemplated an attempt to break out of the state mental facility at Vacaville where he had been taken for a psychiatric evaluation. Authorities there intercepted a note written by Manson that referred to a possible breakout involving weapons. State officials concluded that the note was meant for Fromme and Goode.

Fromme and Goode moved to Sacramento, the state capital, two years ago, apparently to be closer to Manson, who was being held in Folsom prison.

The women dressed in long robes of the kind Fromme was wearing yesterday. Fromme reportedly told acquaintances she was living the life of a nun while Manson remained in prison.

In their statement to the press two months ago, the women said: "Put Manson and Nixon (sic) in a courtroom. See who has broken the laws and keeps breaking them, and who should be imprisoned."

President Nixon gave the Manson case notoriety by declaring publicly that Manson was guilty of murder, though a court had not yet found him guilty.

Lynette Alice Fromme's story is hidden in the bizarre mystery that surrounds the history of Charles Manson and his "family."

The daughter of an aeronautics engineer who resided in Southern California, Fromme apparently fell afoul of her parents as a teen-ager. According to Manson family legend, Charlie—as she calls Manson—found her crying on a sidewalk in Venice, Calif., near Los Angeles, and asked if her father had kicked her out of the house, which he had. Manson offered to take her with

Manson's 'Family'

him.

"No one had ever treated me like that before, not pushed me around," she recalled her, "so I just picked up all my things and went." She never turned back.

At Manson's trial, Fromme testified that as a child "I thought I was ugly." Explaining why she had been attracted to Manson, she said, "A dog goes to somebody who loves it and takes care of it."

She moved into the life of drugs,



Associated Press

Lynette Fromme, left, and Nancy Pitman are shown in 1972 photo at left before arraignment in Stockton as suspects in slaying of Marine and his wife. Photo at right shows Fromme during 1970 vigil for Charles Munson.

sex, rock music and occult theology that Manson created.

Vincent Bugliosi, the chief prosecutor at Manson's trial and co-author of "Helter Skelter", has written that Fromme once tried to choke him about her sex life.

She was explaining to him, Bugliosi wrote, that she cared for George Spahn, a blind man in his 80s who owned a ranch in the San Fernando Valley north of Los Angeles where the Manson family lived for long periods. Bugliosi wrote:

"She was in love with George [Spahn], Squeaky said; if he asked her to marry him, she would . . . He was also, she added, in an obvious attempt to choke me, very good in bed. She was quite graphic."

Bugliosi believes Fromme was the ex-officio leader of the Manson family once Manson was arrested. She's on a power trip," he said. His co-author, Gentry, observed in an interview yesterday that Manson kept the women in the family in "incredibly subservient positions" when he was out of jail, but that his absence gave the women a chance to exercise authority on their own.

No one has satisfactorily explained exactly what the Manson Family was, or what its members had to do. Law enforcement officials involved in the investigation of the Manson case con-

cluded that ritual murder was common in its ranks. Some thought a new member had to commit a murder to be initiated, though this was never proven.

Manson apparently thinks of himself as Christ, but at various times as much else.

Manson reportedly had brooded since 1961 about some kind of impending end of Western civilization, and in 1969 this evolved into the hazy ideas that he referred to among his followers as "helter skelter."

The term apparently derived from the rock record of that title in a 1969 Beatles album. In Manson's mind, according to some observers, the phrase became linked with a theory that the blacks would rise up in an upheaval of "helter skelter" proportions, kill millions of white and take over the reins of government in America and elsewhere.

After 40 or 50 years, according to the theory, the blacks would realize that they were unfit to run the world and would turn power over to Manson because they recognized his superior qualities through their "super awareness."

Apparently to accelerate the race war he foresaw, Manson tried to create the impression that the Tate-Labianea murders were the work of blacks.

Also to help speed the day of his ultimate recognition as a savior, Manson reportedly conceived the idea of "The Hole—a mystic retreat he wanted to establish in California's Death Valley—from which he and his followers would make forays to sack cities and kill people.

Yet Manson and his followers talked in terms of love and forgiveness. "Love," said Fromme in an interview for the documentary "Manson," "is infinitely strong and infinitely mad, erratic and crazy, crazy . . ."

At first Fromme and Goode were denied permission to write to Manson in prison, but recently state authorities allowed them to exchange mail. The women sent long letters in thick packets, prison authorities said yesterday.

The correspondence was "regularly perused" by prison authorities, a spokesman said yesterday, "but nothing we've detected [in the letters] suggested anything like this," that is, an assassination attempt on President Ford.

Manson is serving a life sentence, as are three other former family members convicted with him. Many previous followers have publicly disassociated themselves from Manson since his conviction. Fromme and Goode are the only two known to have remained unswervingly loyal.